

and extend my condolences to the families of those who were killed or injured. I know full well how the crew and the air wing on the U.S.S. *Harry S Truman* must feel regarding this tragic occurrence.

This accident underscores the risks that American service members take in order to master and to maintain the skills they need to keep our Nation safe and to protect our security around the world. The military is a dangerous profession, and we cannot take for granted the hazards that our men and women in uniform face on a daily basis, in times of war as well as in times of peace.

Mr. Speaker, last month I visited some of America's troops overseas, particularly in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Germany. With me were two other Members of the House, both of whom are on the Committee on Armed Services with me. We were astonished by what we saw: the dedication, the sacrifice, and above all, the intense level of activity, even in peacetime. It of course was an eye-opener, and it does give one a new sense of appreciation of the military.

It is the kind of education that I believe more Americans should have. As the population grows and fewer and fewer households have a picture on the mantle of a son or daughter in uniform, we do not have as many parents asking us to look after their Johnnie or their Janie who is in the service. We do not have as many Members of Congress with military experience.

That, of course, concerns me, because I don't believe it is good for America to have its military services become separate from the society that supports them and that they in turn defend.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, there is an unfortunate gap between civilian America and military America. Many civilians simply do not understand the role of people in uniform. It is an arduous profession, it is a dangerous profession, as I mentioned a moment ago, and the more civilians that can see our military, the better they can understand just how important a job they do.

One way the military has traditionally tried to maintain a bond with the people in our country is to involve civilians in military activities. That takes many forms, from public airshows to allowing citizens to observe military operations up close.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, the issue of how civilians should be involved in military activities is now subject to no small debate. I hasten to say, this is not a trivial matter. It is important for civilians to see how the military works, what they get for their money, and most of all, just what excellent men and women wear the uniform of the United States today.

I can certainly understand why, following the terribly sad situation involving the U.S.S. *Greenville*, some might believe that civilians should not be allowed aboard ships or aircraft, or to visit active military facilities. Without addressing the role of civilian ob-

servers in that particular case, let me say that I believe closing the doors of military facilities to civilian observers would be counterproductive.

To be clear, they should remain just that, observers. They should not be in control of any military hardware. Keeping hands off is no reason to keep eyes out. The Constitution provides for civilian control of the military, and that requires an informed public. Allowing responsible citizens access to the operating military is the most basic way of keeping the public aware of what the military life is all about, and what part the armed services should play in our society.

Even more basically, the more civilians see the military, the more word gets around that our men and women in uniform deserve our support. It works the other way, too. Military personnel are glad to know that their work is being seen and appreciated by the people back home.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the military is on its way to becoming just another special interest group, an organization that sees its own interests as separate from the rest of society. But the military is an integral part of our society. Indeed, it is woven by tradition and constitutional design into the very fabric of America itself.

To separate the military from civilian observation would be no less significant than separating our flag from the stars and stripes.

STATEMENT OF MARITZA LUGO ACCUSING THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AND STATE SECURITY OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, despite the visitors, some from this body, who are going down to meet with the Cuban dictator and come back thrilled, having drooled with the privilege of meeting with him and having a banquet in his palace, the reality of Cuba today is quite different. The leaders of the Cuba of tomorrow, of the inevitably democratic Cuba of tomorrow, are in many instances in the political prisons of the totalitarian state today.

One such young woman, the mother of two, is Maritza Lugo, a Cuban political prisoner of conscience. A few days ago she managed to sneak out. She knows she is risking her life. But if she had the courage to sneak this out for the world to know, I think that I have the obligation to read it for my colleagues and those interested to know what she says.

Statement by Maritza Lugo, March 5, 2001, addressed to all people of good will who defend human rights.

She states:

From this horrible place I come before you, the international organizations who defend

human rights, the organizations defenders of democracy, justice, and peace, the religious organizations who promote liberty; the whole world and its people, to denounce the government of Cuba.

I accuse the dictatorial government imposed on Cuba and its repressive arm, the State Security, of all the injustices and abuses they commit against the Cuban people, the penal population, and especially against the political prisoners of conscience. I accuse those miserable and cowardly men and women who, through the use of force, commit all types of human rights violations, while nothing stops them as they attempt to defend a false revolution built and maintained upon a foundation of lies and infamies.

As a physically defenseless woman in ill health, as a mother of two unfortunate daughters currently without a mother's care and armed with my religious faith as my only weapon, I accuse.

I accuse them of publicly blaming every day a foreign country to give a false impression to the Cuban people that they have nothing to be guilty of. And this is why we, the repressed ones, demand that the criminals be sanctioned in the name of all victims that have suffered and continue to suffer in our homeland.

Stop the continuous wanton detention of innocent people whose only crime is disagreeing with the Castro regime. Stop taking them to inhumane prison cells where they are physically as well as psychologically tortured, as are their family members. They are kept in these prisons for an arbitrary and undetermined amount of time, living among dangerous common criminals and exposed to all kinds of risks. They are kept incarcerated for months without an expeditious trial, serving an unjust sentence while waiting to be charged or tried, as others are tried and unjustly condemned.

To the dictatorial government, I say, stop denying that you torture people. Stop denying international organizations access to our prisons with the pretext that you do not accept others meddling in internal affairs or that you do not compromise your sovereignty. To promote your agenda, you conveniently allow bribery and deception to prevent the inspection of these prisons according to international law.

Maritza Lugo continues:

I denounce that political prisoners are treated differently from other prison inmates. We are more rigorously repressed, even though the behavior of some common prisoners may be undesirable. Political prisoners, "counterrevolutionaries," as they call us, are constantly watched by guards and common prisoners trained for this sole purpose. We are searched more often and more demands are placed on us to follow their stringent so-called rules. The women's prisons are practically uninhabitable due to the putrid water that leaks from the floors above. The sinks are clogged and the prisoners have to do their wash on the floor. We are neither given supplies nor detergents to clean, leaving us to our own resources to solve our problems, using our own pieces of clothing. But this doesn't stop them from making demands on us and passing inspection to check our cleanliness. If they fail you, they submit a report that may carry the possibility of punishment. Medical attention is atrocious and there's hardly any medicine, while the Communist government affords the luxury of exporting doctors and medicine to other countries. This is not done because government officials are kind and generous people. This is done for propaganda purposes only, taking advantage of the misery other nations suffer to sell them their

propaganda of solidarity and unselfish interest.

Stop showing the exterior walls of prisons as well-kept and elegant facades while incarcerated human beings are degraded in extreme dearth.

I denounce that the prison food is vile.

Families arrive weary and emaciated bringing bags of food to supply the needs of the prisoners, only to be turned away because authorities fail to notify them that visiting hours have been changed. That is why they don't want international inspectors. They do not want the world to know these internal matters so well known to the innocent political prisoners.

I denounce that, in the majority of cases, we leave these prisons physically ill, thus history continues to repeat itself as so many of us are imprisoned so many times. That is why the Castro government represses us, implementing laws that penalize any group of two or more people whose ideas resist and oppose the so-called revolutionary government of Castro.

I accuse the Cuban government of separating the Cuban family, who, in desperation flee Cuba for political reasons.

I accuse the so-called "revolutionary government" of the political and democratic ignorance our people suffer, as they deceive the unwary people of the world with their propaganda of mass and cultural opinion education. They accomplish this by creating public opinion created by the state using Nazi-style techniques copied from Bolshevik Russia where Cubans pay a high price, acting hypocritically as they pretend to go along in public in order to subsist.

We ask the addressees of these lines, soon to convene in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Human Rights Commission, to discuss Cuba, to consider the ill-treatment of the Cuban people by its own government. I know that no delegation, not even those who defend Castro, will be permitted to come to visit me so they can corroborate this raw truth.

If any justice exists in the world for Maritza Lugo and her denunciation, this government, the government of Castro, should be sanctioned for this and so many other violations that they are constantly inflicting upon the Cuban population as they deceive and laugh at the whole world.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the reality of Cuba today, from Maritza Lugo, President of the 30th of November Democratic Party, from the women's prison popularly known as Black Cloak.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, source of creation and well-spring of revelation, Your word re-

verberates an awareness of how our behavior affects others. Your spirit penetrates our indifference to the consequences of our actions or to the suffering of others. Once illusion sets in or the infectious sin begins in any of us the whole human system can be measured by its fever.

As Isaias says: "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint."

One continent will not contain the epidemic. One system of any organization cannot localize the dysfunction. One group will not absorb the injustice without infecting us all.

By Your Spirit, give us a clear diagnosis of the evils within us that we may be on our way to discovering a remedy to our Nation's weakness and a lasting cure for our problems both here and abroad both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAPPS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 5(a) of the James Madison Commemoration Commission Act (P.L. 106-550), I hereby appoint the following Members to the James Madison Commemoration Commission:

Mr. Rick Boucher, VA.

Mr. Jim Moran, VA.

Yours Very Truly,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 5(b) of the James Madison Commemoration Commission Act (P.L. 106-550), I hereby appoint the following individuals to the James Madison Commemoration Advisory Committee:

Dr. James Billington, VA.

The Honorable Theodore A. McKee, PA.

Yours Very Truly,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR TAX RELIEF

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, this House, indeed, this Congress has a lot to celebrate and a lot to be proud of.

After decades of wasteful spending and rising Federal deficits, our fiscal house is in order. Since 1997, we have paid down \$363 billion of the Federal debt, and we are on course to paying off the complete \$2 trillion of the Federal public debt over the next 10 years.

This Republican Congress has set aside nearly \$3 trillion for the protection of Social Security, Medicare and further debt relief. Mr. Speaker, the nonpartisan CBO estimates that we will have a \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years. Our fiscal house is not only in order, it is in the best possible shape in generations, and now we are going to give Americans what they need, want and deserve, real tax relief.

No one doubts that if the surplus money stays in Washington, it will be spent on bigger, more wasteful Federal bureaucracy. We need to put America's families first. The surplus belongs to them, not the wasteful spenders in Washington. The right thing to do is return the surplus to the people who earned it, the American taxpayers.

MILITARY BERETS SHOULD BE MANUFACTURED IN UNITED STATES

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, the Army is preparing to outfit every soldier with a new black beret. Some people oppose this policy, but whether or not it is a good idea, one thing we can all agree on is that these berets should be made in the United States.

So why is the Pentagon acquiring 2.5 million berets from companies who make these berets in countries like China, Romania and Sri Lanka? This is very troubling.

The Pentagon has waived the law which requires domestic production of military uniforms. This decision is costing American companies millions